

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) today introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives to eliminate the required five-month waiting period in the Social Security Disability (SSD) program for terminally ill patients. The bill is the companion to legislation introduced last fall by Senator Sherrod Brown in the U.S. Senate.

“It is unreasonable, even unethical that people who are dying and who have been approved for SSD still have to wait five months to receive their benefits,” Wilson said.

The current system stems from a law put into place to verify that the SSD recipients truly will not work again.

“I am a fiscally conservative Blue Dog and on its face such a law might seem like a good way to check for fraud. But, it doesn’t make sense to penalize the terminally ill. They should be able to receive their benefits immediately,” Wilson added.

Ohioans have died waiting for these benefits. Arthur Woolweaver of Cuyahoga Falls died of cancer before receiving his disability payments. When he was diagnosed he was told he must wait the five months before being able to collect the \$1800 per month to which he was entitled. He died before he ever received his first check. Now his widow is unable to collect his benefits.

“Many people have been hurt by this system,” Wilson said. “I am proud of this legislation, which will waive this waiting period and ease the financial burden associated with terminal illness by allowing patients with life expectancies of six months or less to begin collecting Social Security Disability payments earlier.”

To see the full text of the bill, click [here](#).